

today, the Republicans will have succeeded in creating a government without a conscience. Shame on them.

Let me appeal to the moderates on the other side. Do the right thing. Don't throw away your conscience. Don't be a cheap date. Vote against this bill.

PREPARING FOR AN AVIAN (BIRD) INFLUENZA PANDEMIC

(Mr. MURPHY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MURPHY. The United States must prepare for an avian flu pandemic which could potentially kill tens of thousands of people and cost tens of billions of dollars. Similar to the 1918 influenza epidemic, the avian flu is a primary cause of death where victims suffer a severe response of respiratory distress as their immune system is compromised.

Citizens should make sure they still get their annual flu shot and practice good hygiene, even though the likelihood of scenarios of flu pandemic will not occur. But Congress needs to make sure we improve vaccine distribution mechanisms, improve lines of communications and take steps to mitigate panic to make sure that there is essential communication with local media outlets.

We also must increase vaccine production and create incentives for pharmaceutical manufacturers to lower costs and promote cooperation. All this means Congress must move forward to follow the President's national strategy for the pandemic influenza.

For further information, I encourage my colleagues to visit my Web site at murphy.house.gov.

PRIORITIES

(Mr. CHANDLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CHANDLER. Mr. Speaker, the cuts to education, health care, housing and nutrition programs that we will consider later today once again expose the real agenda of the majority.

This reconciliation package presents a simple choice, either care for the poor, the sick and the hungry, and help students attend college, or cut taxes for the wealthy and give yet another handout to the oil industry. The choice seems almost too easy, but yet again, our friends on the other side of the aisle will sacrifice the moral principle of caring for your neighbor in favor of funneling billions in tax breaks and government handouts to the most well off.

These are the priorities of the majority. Increase our debt, punish the least among us, and line the pockets of the wealthy. I urge my colleagues to oppose this misguided and immoral reconciliation package.

CONGRATULATING MR. AND MRS. STANLEY AND DEANNA MAYFIELD ON BEING HONORED AS DISTINGUISHED CITIZENS BY THE BOY SCOUTS OF AMERICA

(Mr. CONAWAY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CONAWAY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize two of San Angelo, Texas' most dedicated and patriotic citizens, Stanley and Deanna Mayfield. On November 21, 2005, they will be honored by the Concho Valley Council of the Boy Scouts of America with the Distinguished Citizen Award in recognition of their contributions to scouting and the citizens of San Angelo.

John Stanley Mayfield and Deanna Lee Gilmore Mayfield married on August 22, 1964. They moved to San Angelo after Stanley completed 5½ years of service as an Air Force F-111 pilot. Since then, they have been active volunteers in San Angelo and throughout Texas. They have dedicated their lives to the service of others and deserve to be recognized for their contributions.

In addition to volunteering as members of and on the board of directors of many charitable and community development organizations, both are active members of the First Baptist Church and have served as appointees of Governor George W. Bush, Deanna as Vice Chairman of the Texas Real Estate Commission and Stanley on the State Bar of Texas.

The proud parents of three children and seven grandchildren, their giving hearts have been inspirational to many, and they have truly led by example. I personally know of no two people more worthy, who have worked harder, donated more time or who have been as valuable to their community as Stanley and Deanna Mayfield. They serve as an inspiration to all those who are lucky enough to be around them, and I am honored to represent them in the 11th Congressional District of Texas.

THE DEFICIT REDUCTION BILL

(Mr. BISHOP of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BISHOP of New York. Mr. Speaker, when explaining budget reconciliation to the American people, perhaps the closest thing we can compare it to is balancing a checkbook. Unless, of course, we are talking about the way Congress balances its books.

On one side of the ledger, spending cuts ostensibly earmarked for rebuilding the gulf coast are in reality set aside for tax cuts, despite three consecutive record-breaking deficits and \$3 trillion in new debt.

Even after the tax cuts are in place, there won't be anything left in the other column to relieve Americans from the misery left in the wake of devastating hurricanes.

Championing tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans by punching holes in the safety net is the hallmark of this administration's failed economic policies. But it shouldn't be the way we balance our books.

While millionaires will gain another \$19,000 tax break, the typical student, already saddled with \$17,500 in debt, faces \$5,800 in new fees and higher interest rates. How can we in good conscience cut student loans after the College Board tells us this is the most expensive semester ever?

Common sense tells us: When you are in a hole, stop digging. But we are still digging, falling deeper into red ink with this budget, beyond what we and future generations of Americans can afford.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this sham deficit reduction bill.

VETERANS DAY

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow is Veterans Day. On this holiday, it is certainly appropriate that we recognize the sacrifice of our brave veterans that have fought to protect our freedom in years past.

But Veterans Day also provides a good opportunity to note the progress our military is making today. Today, we are at war. Our troops are fighting in the cause of freedom. Just 3 years ago, Saddam Hussein wielded a brutal totalitarian regime over an oppressed people. Today, Saddam is in jail and Iraqis have adopted a constitution upholding the rule of law.

Our effort to train and deploy new Iraqi security forces is also progressing. As of October, over 206,000 Iraqi forces have been trained and equipped. Similar progress has been seen in Afghanistan. Each day we continue the rebuilding of these war-torn countries. As a veteran, I am proud to say our military is not about occupation; it is about freedom, our freedom and freedom around the world.

Mr. Speaker, as we take time tomorrow to remember our living veterans, let us also recognize the noteworthy accomplishments of our troops serving today and not forget the words on the Mall—"Freedom Is Not Free."

BUDGET RECONCILIATION

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, tomorrow we will honor our Nation's veterans. But the budget reconciliation legislation that we present today will not honor our veterans, because their families will be impacted by the negative aspects of this legislation.

\$11.9 billion in cuts in Medicaid will impact the families of veterans. \$50 billion cuts in Medicaid over 10 years will